made, but as we journeyed toward Petrograd I felt very keenly that the Soviet was drifting rudderless in the storm. Its paper, *Izvestia*, presented a chaotic agglomeration of appeals, resolutions, and articles, without any leading idea except glorification of the revolution. On the same page it called on the people to maintain order and demanded that the Provisional Government permit any citizen to kill any counterrevolutionary general on sight. Patriotic and even chauvinist resolutions passed by individual factories and military units appeared alongside demands for immediate peace at any price. It was impossible to delineate the policy of the Soviet in this chorus of divergent claims. All this was disturbing, and by the end of the trip I felt more confused than elated. I observed a similar mood in other returning exiles.

We reached Petrograd on the rainy morning of April 2. The Soviet had planned a reception for the members of the Second Duma, with flags, bands, and speeches, but the train was seventeen hours late and only Emma and my mother were waiting for it on the nearly empty platform of the shabby and dirty station. We went to my parents' apartment. The family reunion fell short of my anticipations. All of us had changed. We had much to tell and to ask one another after the ten years I had spent in prison and exile, but events had stunned us, and we could not at once pick up the threads of old times. I felt as if I did not belong to myself, and my parents took it for granted that I would not have much time for them. Emma's impressions of Petrograd were as discouraging as those I had from reading newspapers and *Izvestia*. She also was full of concern about what was going on. After a brief exchange of thoughts with her I went to the Tauride Palace.

THE TAURIDE PALACE

The Palace had been built by Prince Potemkin, the famous favorite of Katherine the Great, to celebrate the conquest of the Crimea (Tauride). Katherine Hall, its immense ballroom—designed to accommodate twenty thousand dancers, according to legend—looked like a combination of a crowded marketplace and a military camp. Thousands of persons sat and lay on the floor along the walls—peasants, sailors, soldiers with their rifles in piles. Here and there people pressed around a speaker. Processions were coming and going with flags and bands. The air was full of smoke, steam, and deafening noise.

I met Chkheidze in his office. A small elderly man, with gray hair and beard, he sat quietly at the huge desk, wearing a heavy overcoat